PROVINCIAL COMMAND

LEADERSHIP GUIDE

of the

MANITOBA AND NORTHWESTERN ONTARIO COMMAND

of

The Royal Canadian Legion

The purpose of this guide, developed by the Leadership and Development Committee, is to offer tips and ideas that can help to make your elected term successful as possible. Please take the time to review the information contained herein.

The information contained is intended as an overview of your duties and responsibilities. Please do not hesitate to contact the members of your Leadership & Development Committee with any questions you may have.

At your installation, you gave a pledge to perform the duties of your office faithfully and to the best of your ability. The duties you have undertaken are complex and cannot and should not be taken lightly. You must remember at all times to act in an unbiased and fair manner and in the best interests of your Branch.

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1) REFERENCE MATERIAL

It cannot be stressed enough the importance of having, reading and understanding the bylaws.

- The General By-Laws of the Royal Canadian Legion
- The General By-Laws of the Manitoba & Northwestern Ontario Command (available online free of charge @ mbnwo.ca)
- Branch By-Laws (or annex 'A' in The General By-Laws of the Manitoba & Northwestern Ontario Command)

Other very valuable Manuals available through Dominion Command are:

Act to Incorporate
Ritual & Insignia Manual
Rules of Procedure For Legion Meetings
Honours and Awards
Membership Manual
Poppy Manual
Sports Guide

It is suggested that you keep a complete set of manuals at your branch at all times.

2) BRANCH PRESIDENT

The President is, by virtue of his office, is a member of all Committees.

The President is, by the General By-laws of this Command, a member of Zone Council and is, therefore, obligated to attend all its meetings as well as Zone Meetings. If the President is unable to attend he should appoint a member of the Branch Executive Committee to attend on his behalf. The President is also responsible to ensure that the Branch is fully represented at Zone and District Meetings.

The President is the Chief Executive Officer of the Branch. If the Branch does not have an elected or appointed Chairman the President is by virtue of his office, the presiding officer at all its meetings.

The President typifies to the community the Branch itself, that he is its representative as well as its leader. He personifies and represents the Branch, declaring its will. While he exercises leadership, he **must accept direction** from the Branch. He must understand the Legion By-Laws, both Provincial and Dominion and direct his Executive Committee to do the same.

The President sets an example of fairness, courtesy and obedience to the rules, and enforces order and strict observance of the By-laws.

3) BRANCH IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT (GLB 614.)

The President becomes the Immediate Past President when his successor assumes office.

Take a moment to have a private talk with the new President and offer your assistance. Invite the President to share his/her ideas and plans for the coming term. Be careful not to be critical.

Other officers of the Branch will be affected either positively or negatively by how well you and the new President work together. As the most **senior officers of your Branch you and the President must remember to lead by example.**

The Immediate Past President is by virtue of his office a member of the Branch Executive Committee and enjoys the same rights and powers as the other elected members of that Committee. This automatic appointment provides for the continuity of administration. His knowledge and experience is thus not lost to the Branch. The Immediate Past President may be appointed to chair one or more Committees.

Any immediate past president who is absent from three (3) consecutive meetings of either the executive or the branch, or a combination of both, without due cause shall cease to hold office. Gen. By-laws Section 614 (b).

4) BRANCH VICE PRESIDENTS

There may be one or more Vice Presidents, and their importance should not be underestimated. The Vice Presidents are usually appointed to chair one or more important committees.

In the absence of the President all rights and powers vested in him are for the time being transferred to the Vice President, or if there is more than one, then according to seniority of office. Such Vice President then sits as presiding officer or otherwise represents the Branch.

Your primary goal at this time should be to learn as much as possible as you prepare to one day serve as Branch President. You may be called upon to chair a meeting of the Branch, to host visiting officers and guests. Be prepared as the duties of a Vice-President are varied.

You have a unique opportunity to assist in the direction of your Branch. Take time to consider the problems and issues which lie ahead. Use every tool at your disposal, remain impartial, seek input from your fellow officers, particularly the President, guidance from Command levels and you will be prepared when that days arrives.

5) BRANCH SECRETARY

If the Secretary is a full time or regular part time employee of the Branch receiving salary or wages for services, the Secretary is not eligible to hold an executive position or vote at Executive meetings and can only speak on a topic when asked. Secretary carries out the directives of the Branch and Executive Committee.

It is imperative that for you to attend all Regular, Executive and Special Meetings of the Branch and that it is your duty to keep a complete and accurate account of the business transacted.

You must ensure your records of the proceedings will be the only record available for future reference and that all correspondence should be brought immediately to the attention of the Branch president or other appropriate officer. You should also become familiar with the membership process and various forms. Please utilize the membership manual.

The essentials of the record are:

- The kind of meeting (regular, special, executive).
- The time, place and date of meeting.
- Name of presiding officer and those of the other officers and executive members present.
- Disposition of the minutes of the previous meeting and correspondence received since the last meeting.
- The names of the movers and seconders of motions, the motion written out fully, and a notation indicating whether the motion was carried or not carried, together with a short resume of the discussion that took place.
- Time of adjournment.

While the Minutes are a record of things done, or to be done, and not a record of what has been said, it is advisable to give a short outline of the discussion out of which the motion arose. This will refresh the memory of members when the minutes are read at the next meeting.

The Secretary receives and replies to all official correspondence promptly after consultation with the proper authority.

Before a meeting, it is the responsibility of the Secretary to see that all members are advised in ample time as to the nature of the meeting, the date, time and place clearly stated. The Secretary shall complete all forms, reports, questionnaires and advise the Executive Committee of all circulars and directives received from all Legion levels.

6) BRANCH TREASURER

The responsibility of the Treasurer is to keep a true and accurate account of all monies received and paid out by the Branch.

The Treasurer shall deposit funds of the Branch in a Chartered Bank, Trust Company or Credit Union designated by the Branch and shall keep the books of account current and be ready to produce them when called for by the Branch or the Branch auditors.

Cheques issued shall bear the signatures of two of the persons authorized to sign on behalf of the Branch by the Executive Committee. No cheques shall be signed in blank. All cheques should be pre-numbered.

The Treasurer's job is to review the operating expenses of the Branch at all times. Expenses that should be monitored regularly are; telephone, bank charges, advertising, miscellaneous, stationary and the largest expense for most Branches, wages and benefits. The Treasurer shall make a financial report at such intervals as considered necessary by the Branch.

7) BRANCH EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee is the governing body of the Branch, between General Meetings. All recommendations made must be approved at the next General Meeting. However you must remember at installation, *"You, together with the other elected officers of Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion as* ***directed by its general membership"***.

The Executive Committee is composed of the President, Immediate Past President, the Vice President(s) and the elected members necessary for the successful operation of the Branch.
The Executive Committee shall be responsible for the execution of policies authorized by the general membership, providing such policies are consistent with the General Bylaws, rules, and principles of The Royal Canadian Legion. All new business requiring the approval of a General Meeting should be considered by the Executive Committee prior to the presentation to the members for approval.

Any member who is a full time or regular part time employee of The Royal Canadian Legion shall not be eligible to hold any elected Executive Office. Please refer to GBL 112.

Each Committee Chairman should report on his Committee's activities at the Executive and General Meetings of the Branch.

8) BRANCH SERVICE OFFICER

Branch Service Officers assist Veterans by identifying those with unmet health needs and possible benefits from VAC and than by making the appropriate referrals to your Command Service Officers.

It is imperative that the Branch Service Officer be included as a member of the Poppy Trust Fund Committee as he/she can provide

valuable guidance as to the manner in which Poppy Trust Funds may be utilized. The assistance that this person can provide will ensure that the Committee does not run afoul of the regulations.

9) BRANCH CHAPLAIN

One or more Chaplains may be elected or appointed. The Chaplain is vested with the spiritual leadership of the branch.
The Chaplain should enjoy the confidence of the President and other duties compatible with his office as the President may request.

The Chaplain is a member of the Executive Committee as he is elected or appointed, unless branch by-laws state otherwise.

10) BRANCH SERGEANT-AT-ARMS

Dependent upon provisions of the Branch By-laws, the Sergeant-at-Arms may be appointed or elected. This comrade should have knowledge of Ritual & Insignia and protocol. Refer to the R&I manual for details.

When on duty his position is at the entrance door of the hall or meeting room. He assists the President in maintaining order during the meeting. He ensures that only those who are entitled may attend, and to perform other duties assigned to him by the President.

The Sgt-at-Arms ensures that the Colour Party carries the appropriate colours. He is in charge of the colours and make sure they are clean and presentable at all times.

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